

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 L-02 EB-03 PM-03 DODE-00 RSR-01

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R 150742 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8319

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

USLO PEKING

S E C R E T SEOUL 3813

LIMDIS NOFORN

REF: TAIPEI 3472

SUMMARY: WHILE WISHING TO MAINTAIN GOOD BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE ROC, THE ROKG IS ACTIVELY TRYING TO ESTABLISH LINES OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE PRC. THE ROKG HAS DECIDED THAT PURSUIT OF AN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE PRC IS WORTH ANY STRAINS IT PUTS ON ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GRC.

1. PREMIER CHIANG'S COMMENT ABOUT POSSIBLE ROKG DISPOSITION TO SEEK ACCOMMODATION WITH PRC EVEN AT COST OF SOME DISASSOCIATION FROM ROC IS PROBABLY CORRECT. THERE IS NO REASON TO ANTICIPATE CHANGE IN THE ROK'S DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH THE ROC, OR IN PATTERN OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS. HOWEVER, ROKG CAN BE EXPECTED INCREASINGLY TO AVOID THE APPEARANCE OF AN OVERLY CLOSE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GRC. ROKG'S READINESS TO ABANDON ROC CAUSE IN ASPAC IS GOOD EXAMPLE.

2. KOREANS SIMPLY DO NOT WANT TO ENDANGER THEIR OWN  
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FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES BY BECOMING ENTANGLED IN, OR ASSOCIATED WITH, GRC' S EFFORTS TO AVOID DIPLOMATIC ISOLATION. THERE IS AN ELEMENT OF EMBARRASSMENT, AND PERHAPS EVEN GUILT, IN ROKG ATTITUDE TOWARD GRC. BUT KOREANS ARE CLEARLY BENT ON SECURING WIDEST POSSIBLE SUPPORT IN THEIR OWN DIPLOMATIC COMPETITION WITH NORTH KOREA.

3. WHILE AVOIDING APPEARANCE OF DISASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALLY FROM GRC, KOREANS ARE ACTIVELY TRYING TO ESTABLISH LINES OF COMMUNICATION TO PRC . IT IS ROK EXPRESSED POLICY TO HAVE RELATIONS WITH " NON- HOSTILE" COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS. THE ROKG WANTS " RECOGNITION" FROM THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, TO BALANCE THE INCREASING DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION GIVEN NORTH KOREA OUTSIDE THE COMMUNIST WORLD. AND THE THE ROKG IS ON RECORD AS FAVORING, EVEN SEEKING, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONTACTS WITH THE PRC.

4. MOFA OFFICIALS HAVE PUBLICLY EXPRESSED THE ROK' S WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE PRC ON THE ISSUE OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. THEY HAVE ALSO STATED THE ROK' S WILLINGNESS TO DEVELOP TRADE AND OTHER CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING THE PRC. MORE PRIVATELY, ROKG OFFICIALS HAVE INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN A NEW ASIAN/ PACIFIC REGIONAL ORGANIZATION WHICH INCLUDES THE PRC AND EXCLUDES ROC.

5. ROKG INITIATIVES TOWARD THE PRC HAVE HAD NO SUCCESS SO FAR. THE PRC HAS NOT RESPONDED TO MOFA' S OVERTURES REGARDING THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. DELEGATES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES SAT TOGETHER AT THE ECAFE MEETING IN TOKYO, BUT PRC REPS WALKEDOUT DURINGINITIAL ADDRESS BY THE ROK FOREIGN MINISTER. THERE HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN SOME MINOR TRADE INVOLVING ROK IMPORTS OF SKINS FROM THE PRC. THIS HAS BEEN INDIRECT AND ECONOMICALLY INSIGNIFICANT, ALTHOUGH ROKG MAY HAVE INTENDED TO GIVE POLITICAL SIGNAL BY THESE IMPORTS. ONLY DIPLOMATIC CONTACT WHICH WE ARE CERTAIN OF HAS BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT BY ROK DIPLOMAT IN HONG KONG TO APPROACH PRC REPRESENTATIVES THERE. SIMILAR ATTEMPTS HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN REBUFFED IN TOKYO

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AND PARIS.

6. IT WOULD THEREFORE APPEAR THAT STEPS TOWARD BETTER ROK- PRC RELATIONS ARE BEING IMPEDED AT PRESENT TIME MORE BY PRC UNRESPONSIVENESS THAN BY ROK UNWILLINGNESS. THE ROKG IS REALISTIC IN ASSESSING THAT, AT PRESENT, ITS RELATIONS WITH ANY COMMUNIST POWER WOULD PROBABLY BE

LIMITED TO THE INFORMAL NON- DIPLOMATIC LEVEL, IF ONLY  
BECAUSE OF THE COMMUNIST BLOC' S OBLIGATIONS TO NORTH KOREA.  
HOWEVER, THE ROKG IS WITHOUT QUESTION READY TO TRY SOME  
ACCOMMODATION WITH THE PRC AND SETS GREAT STORE IN A  
POSSIBLE EVENTUAL PRC ROLE IN ASSURING PEACE ON THE  
KOREA PENINSULA BY RESTRAINING PYONGYANG.

7. IN THIS SITUATION ROKG STILL WISHES TO MAINTAIN THE  
BEST POSSIBLE BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH ROC CONSISTENT  
WITH ITS VIEW OF ITS OWN INTERESTS AND THE CHANGING  
INTERNATIONAL SITUATION. IN LONGER TERMS, THE ROKG, HAS  
DECIDED THAT PURSUIT OF AN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE PRC IS  
WORTH ANY STRAINS IT PUTS ON ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE  
GRC.  
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